

Chances are tossed away WANDERERS' OLD HABITS ARE STILL ALIVE

Wycombe Wanderers 1, Sutton United 2.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS' habit of tossing away goal-scoring chances with gay abandon reared its ugly head again on Monday evening when former Loakes Park boss Sid Cann returned to his old stamping ground with Sutton United.

The start of the game was delayed for 10 minutes while officials hunted a replacement for a missing linesman. Sutton used the breathing space to wait and see if their ex-Enfield star Terry Howard would arrive in time. In fact, they played the opening six minutes with only ten men before substitute Morrish appeared.

Wanderers were forced to field a rather strange formation with Charlie Gale and Keith Samuels both being unavailable through illness. Stuart Thompson passed a late fitness test on his ankle and was drafted into the inside-right position, making only his third appearance in this role. Peter Martin played at left-back and Peter Eyres came in for his first senior game since February at wing-half.

Fluent Sutton always seemed to have the spare man around when it mattered and apart from the closing eight minutes they always looked composed.

QUICK BREAK

Relying on the quick break from deep inside their own territory, Sutton always threatened through their lanky centre-forward Hutchins and the hard-working Great Britain forward Laurie Pritchard.

Before Sutton took a 21st minute lead, Wycombe had had their chances of opening the scoring but were unable to apply the finishing touch to some creative approach work.

Horseman's wicked free-kick swerved just wide of the far post and then Horseman slotted a beautiful pass down the left-wing for Merrick to screw his shot inches over the far corner.

Sutton's first goal was a well-executed affair — a chessboard move — which had obviously been practised to perfection. Powell floated over a cross, Pritchard cheekily flicked a pass inside for Bladon to shoot home via the left hand post.

Soon after Busby missed a wonderful chance to square the match when he raced forward on the Eyres' thoughtful cross, but instead of heading towards goal, as Roffey had already advanced a few yards, the young centre-forward chested down the pass before the danger was eventually cleared.

Merrick headed over the top from less than a yard out before, with a quick breakaway, Sutton scored their second two minutes from the break. It was a goal which always seemed possible with Wanderers' left defensive flank looking so vulnerable all evening.

The 6ft. 3in. Hutchins sold Martin the dummy and streaked down the wing. His waist-high cross was superbly volleyed home by Morrish from 12 yards.

Sutton appeared to grow just a little over-confident in the second half and were shaken out of their complacency in the 73rd minute when Horseman crashed a drive against the underside of the bar with Busby heading the rebound hopelessly over the top.

TONY SCORES

However, eight minutes from the end Thompson and Baker worked a neat opening for Horseman to score with a fine shot on the turn. Worley, troubled by an ankle, left the field and Paul Bates replaced him.

Wycombe nearly stole a point in an exciting finish when from Bates' free-kick, Horseman flicked on and Eyres, bursting through on the overlap, headed narrowly over.

Wycombe Wanderers: J. Maskell; I. Rundle, P. Martin; B. Baker, V. Faulkner, P. Eyres; L. Worley, S. Thompson, V. Busby, A. Horseman, L. Merrick. Sub: P. Bates.